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FISHERY MARKET NEWS

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FISHERY MARKET NEWS

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FISHERY MARKET NEWS

A REVIEW OF CONDITIONS AND TRENDS OF THE COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

May 1939

Washington, D. C.

Vol. 1, No. 5

SUMMARY

Fresh Fish

New England.--March vessel landings at Boston, Gloucester, and Portland 18 percent under a year ago in volume but only 1 percent in value. Average unit price up almost 20 percent with increases for all important species except halibut and flounders. Haddock, cod, and pollock landings increased over previous month but rosefish catch declined one-fourth. Landings for first quarter 16 percent under last year in volume and 7 percent in value. Rosefish only important variety taken in greater quantities.

Massachusetts.--Larger boats formerly used in anchor gill-net fishery changing to otter trawl gear. During April mackerel fleet landed first catches in Cape May and New York.

Rhode Island.--Lobster prices higher than last year. Hard and soft clam values affected by competition.

Connecticut.--In April production of most varieties 30 percent less than last year. Lobster production under normal since 90 percent of pots were destroyed in September hurricane.

Florida.--Key West sponge prices advanced almost 15 percent recently. Value of 1938 fishery 70 percent over 1937 but future prospects in doubt as same organism that destroyed sponges in Bahamas now present in Key West area. Red snapper and grouper landings for 1938 at Pensacola 16 percent and 42 percent, respectively, under 1937.

Great Lakes.--Wisconsin fishery for herring in Lakes Michigan and Superior decreased 32 percent and 18 percent, respectively, in 1938. Over 4,000,000 pounds of fishery products received at Chicago during March; slightly over one-half from 7 Canadian Provinces.

California.--For first quarter catch of yellow-fin tuna and skipjack 80 percent over last year. Purse seiners may triple 1938 tuna catch in Cape San Lucas, Mexico, area.

Washington.--First halibut landed at Seattle April 5. Opening prices well under last year. Catch for month 21 percent under 1938.

Frozen Fish

Despite large holdings in fall of 1938, frozen stocks on hand April 15 lowest since same date in 1936. New England with less than half of last year's volume showed greatest decrease both in poundage and percentage. Great Lakes, Gulf, and Pacific States stocks somewhat greater than last year but all areas decreased from previous month. Total frozen fish and frozen shellfish holdings are 26 percent and 21 percent, respectively, under last year. Total holdings in New York, Boston, and Chicago continue to decline.

Canned Fish

Total 1938 Pacific salmon pack practically same as in 1937. United States and Alaska, Japan, and British Columbia produced 64, 21, and 15 percent, respectively. Bulk of pack was humpback or pink salmon, with 42 percent; and blueback or red salmon, with 37 percent. Un-sold stocks of North American pack of canned salmon in hands of packers reported as million and a quarter cases, 63 percent being Alaska reds. For first quarter California tuna pack 63 percent over last year. For same period California mackerel pack declined 27 percent. California sardine pack for season through March shows 12 percent increase.

Foreign Trade

Imports and exports of edible fishery commodities both in March and in first quarter greater than last year. Increased imports for the quarter noted in salted groundfish and herring, and canned sardines, tuna, and crab meat. Important increased exports were canned salmon and sardines. Sturgeon imports from Canada, due to a newly developed fishery, are increasing annually while supply from Soviet Russia declines.

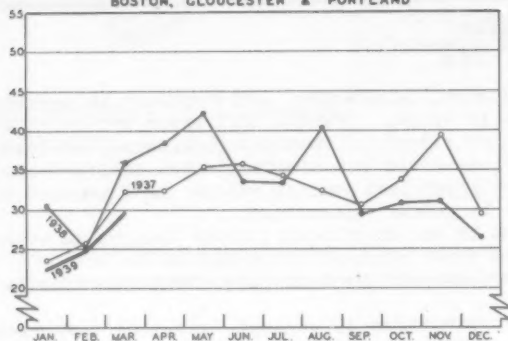
Byproducts

Marine-animal oil production for first quarter 1,000,000 gallons greater than same period last year due to more than doubled production of sardine oil.

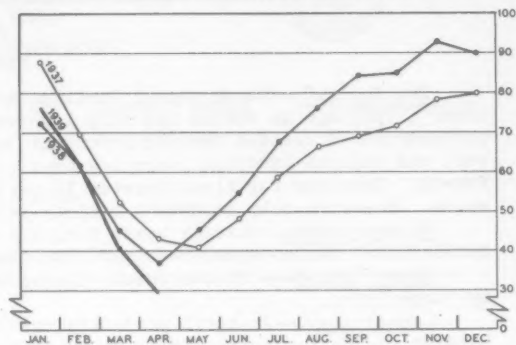
TRENDS OF FISHERY TRADE

In millions of pounds

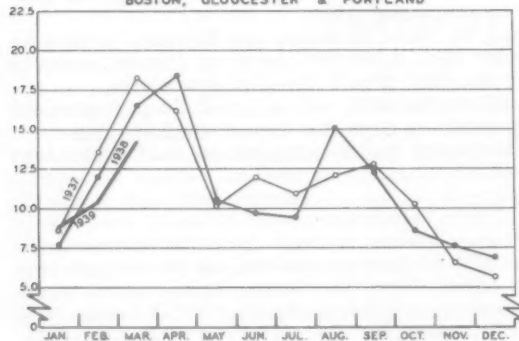
VESSEL LANDINGS, ALL FRESH FISH
BOSTON, GLOUCESTER & PORTLAND



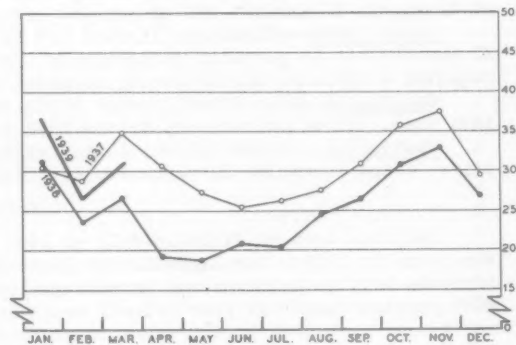
DOMESTIC COLD-STORAGE HOLDINGS OF FROZEN FISH



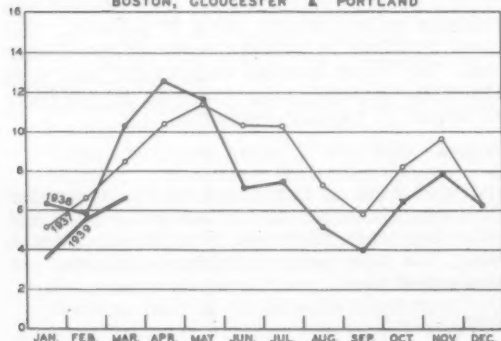
VESSEL LANDINGS, FRESH HADDOCK
BOSTON, GLOUCESTER & PORTLAND



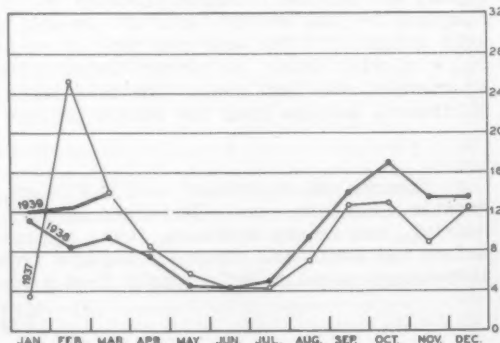
IMPORTS OF EDIBLE FISHERY COMMODITIES



VESSEL LANDINGS, FRESH COD
BOSTON, GLOUCESTER & PORTLAND



EXPORTS OF EDIBLE FISHERY COMMODITIES



CHICAGO'S FISH

By Fred F. Johnson, Assistant Chief, and
Edwin C. Hinsdale, Fisheries Marketing Agent
Division of Fishery Industries, U. S. Bureau of Fisheries

Nearly one-fourth of Chicago's fresh and frozen fish receipts consist of two species--lake trout and halibut. The large contribution of these two single species to the total receipts is surprising in view of the fact that scores of other varieties of fresh- and salt-water fish are handled in the local market.

Authority for allocation of the position of importance of the various species is found in the summaries of receipts of fish in Chicago for the 6 months ended in February, which were made available through the Market News Service of the Bureau of Fisheries.

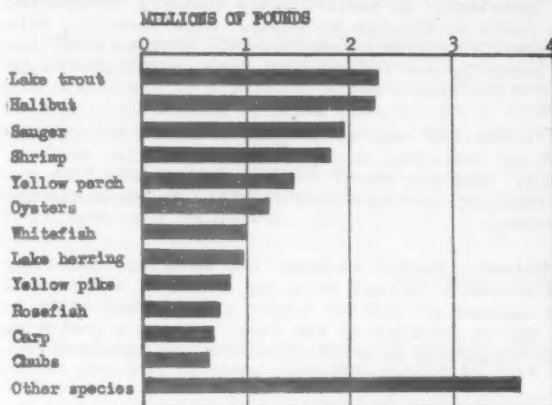


Fig. 1.--Chicago's fish receipts for 6 months by species

modities--a total of 75 species--were received in Chicago.

During the 6-months' period aggregate receipts of fresh and frozen fish and shellfish in the Chicago market amounted to 19,200,000 pounds or an average of 3,200,000 pounds each month. This quantity would supply a pound of fish per capita each month to Chicago's population. However, a considerable part of the fish received in Chicago is not consumed locally but is reshipped to communities outside Chicago. During the month of February 1939 reconsignments of fishery commodities amounted to about one million pounds or nearly one-third of the total receipts during the month. Such reconsignments are said to reach as high as 60 to 75 percent of the total receipts in some months, but in others they may amount to only 20 to 25 percent or less.

As might be expected, due to its closer proximity to the fresh-water producing areas of the United States and Canada, Chicago is primarily a fresh-water fish market. About 3 pounds of fresh-water varieties are received to each 2 pounds of salt-water species. It is interesting to note, however, that 4 salt-water species are included among the 12 most important varieties. These 4 are halibut, from the Pacific Northwest; shrimp, from the Gulf Coast; oysters, from the Atlantic Coast; and rosefish, from New England. The fresh-water varieties emanate largely from the Great Lakes of the United States and Canada; Lakes Manitoba, Winnipeg, Rainy, Dauphin, Nipissing, and Nipigon, Lake of the Woods, and the Pigeon River of Canada; and the Mississippi River and tributaries of the United States.

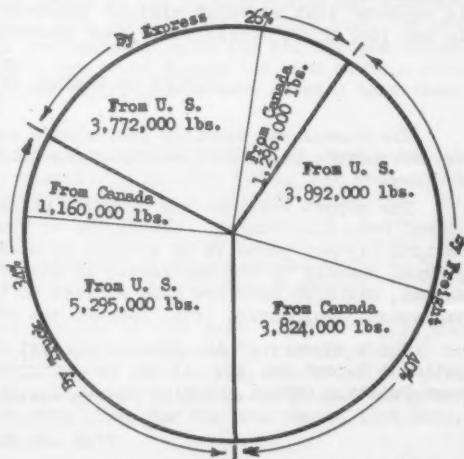


Fig. 2.--Chicago's fish receipts for 6 months by type of carrier and source

Virtually all fish received in Chicago arrive by 3 types of carriers. These are in order of their importance: Rail freight, motor-truck, and rail express. While rail freight leads among the types of carriers when considering all receipts, we find that it follows the motor-truck when considering receipts from domestic sources only. This predominance of the motor-truck in carrying domestic fish is influenced especially by the hauling of fresh-water fish from neighboring States. However, the truck also is an important factor in more distant hauls; for instance, truck receipts of rosefish from Massachusetts for the 6-months' period amounted to the equivalent of nearly 30 carloads. Considerable quantities of other groundfish also were received by truck from New England and truck shipments of shucked oysters from Chesapeake Bay were important. In earlier years steamers transported quantities of fresh-water fish from lake ports to Chicago by water. More recently, this factor in the receipt of fish at this market is considered negligible. Between a million and a million and a half pounds of fish normally are landed each year on Chicago's lake front by local commercial fishermen.

Chicago's distribution of fresh and frozen sea food is largely effected through its 62 wholesale dealers, 10 brokers, 10 hotel and restaurant supply firms, and 14 fish smokers, all of which are primarily direct receivers. Some 200 retail dealers which handle fish exclusively may at times receive direct shipments; however, most of their requirements are purchased through the Chicago wholesale market.

Delivery of fish from the Chicago wholesale market to local and suburban buyers may be effected either by trucks owned by the wholesale dealers or in the trucks of the buyers. The services of trucking agencies or rail express is used for longer hauls. Frequently in the instance of carlot sales, the entire car is diverted to the buyer without a preliminary opening in Chicago. This occurs quite frequently in sales of halibut and salmon arriving from the Pacific Coast.

The old style fish hucksters are factors of decreasing importance in the distribution of Chicago's fish, but they are being replaced by modern so-called hucksters who operate up-to-date refrigerated trucks on established routes throughout the outlying sections of the mid-central States.

Published monthly market news summaries which were used largely as the basis for this article have recently been inaugurated also at the Bureau's Boston Market News office. It is expected that somewhat similar summaries will be developed at the Market News offices in New York City, Jacksonville, and Seattle within the next few months.

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REPORT ON MINERAL CONTENT OF SEAFOODS ISSUED

The Bureau has recently published a report entitled "The Mineral Content of Some Fishery Products", based on investigations conducted by the authors, Hugo W. Nilson and E. J. Coulson.

The report outlines the minerals which are known to be required in our daily diet for normal body functioning. The Bureau of Fisheries has investigated in detail the value of various fishery products as sources of these essential minerals, and this report is the first general summary of the analyses. It has been discovered that canned salmon, fresh oysters, shrimp, and crab meat are good sources of the important daily mineral requirements—calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, iron, copper, and iodine.

For a summary of the mineral content of the various species analyzed, consult Investigational Report No. 41. It may be purchased from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., for 5 cents.

FISH AND SHELLFISH RECIPES

New York City, through its Consumers' Service Division, Department of Markets, and in cooperation with the United States Works Progress Administration, has recently released two mimeographed booklets. One is entitled "One Hundred Ways of Preparing Fish", and the other, "60 Ways of Preparing Shellfish". The former gives special recipes for 28 species of fish, both fresh-water and salt-water varieties, and for five kinds of smoked and salted fish. General instructions on how to select fish, and on baking, broiling, boiling, steam-

ing, poaching, and frying are included, along with suggested recipes for fish salads, soups, and chowders. The shellfish booklet gives 60 ways of preparing clams, both soft and hard, soft crabs, hard crabs, lobsters, mussels, oysters, scallops, and shrimp.

The booklets are available for three cents (3¢), the cost of postage. Inquiries should be addressed to Consumers' Service Division, Department of Markets, 139 Centre Street, New York City.

SHARK MEAT EATEN IN INCREASING QUANTITIES

During recent years there has been a growing realization that the flesh of certain of the sharks found in our coastal waters is palatable and nutritious. Shark meat is considered a delicacy by a portion of our population and is especially desired at Christmas time. Increasing quantities of these fish are being consumed each year and fishermen are finding a market for a portion of their catch which was formerly discarded.

It is understood that in the New England States fishermen have frequently received an average of six and seven cents per pound for sharks, and prices of as high as 11 cents per pound have been reported.

FISHERIES OF MAINE

Herring appeared in the vicinity of Deer Isle early in April and several sardine factories prepared to open. Canadian plants in this section have operated all winter.

Smoked herring packers report 1938 was a fair year. Increased prices were attributed to the scarcity of English smoked herring.

NEW ENGLAND VESSEL LANDINGS INCREASE IN UNIT VALUE

During March prices paid for fishery products landed at the ports of Boston and Gloucester, Mass., and Portland, Maine, by fishing vessels were considerably higher than for the same month last year. In March of this year, the average unit price for all species landed was 3.04 cents per pound as compared with 2.54 cents per pound during the same month a year ago. Prices for all important species except halibut and flounders were greater than those paid in March 1938.

Landings at the three ports during March of this year totaled 29,760,000 pounds, valued at \$906,000, as compared with 36,098,000 pounds, valued at \$915,000 during the same month last year. This is a decrease of 18 percent in quantity and of 1 percent in value. The principal items landed during the month were haddock, 14,364,000 pounds; cod, 6,661,000 pounds; and rosefish, 3,812,000 pounds. The landings of these three species accounted for 83 percent of the total landings during the month. Landings at Boston accounted for 89 percent of the total; those at Gloucester, 8 percent; and those at Portland, 3 percent.

Landings at the three ports during the first quarter of the year totaled 76,749,000 pounds, valued at \$2,282,000, as compared with 91,287,000 pounds, valued at \$2,448,000 in the same period last year. This is a decline of 16 percent in quantity but of only 7 percent in value. The landings of all important species except rosefish declined during the first three months of the current year as compared with those for the same period last year.

FISHERIES OF MASSACHUSETTS IN APRIL

Groundfish.--Otter trawlers continued to provide as large a supply of groundfish as the market would absorb. The demand during April was better than usual, with advanced prices. The anchor gill-net fishery, mainly for cod, is being deserted by larger boats, 11 of which are reported to have abandoned it in favor of otter-trawl gear.

Mackerel.---About 20 vessels definitely have indicated that they will seine for mackerel. Undoubtedly others will change over to bring the number in the fleet nearer to the approximately 60 vessels engaged in the fishery last year. The "Western Explorer", after an exploratory trip for tuna off Florida, joined the mackerel seiners. On April 16 the "Santa Maria" landed the first catch of mackerel, by a vessel of the regular fleet, at Cape May, New Jersey--4,200 pounds of $\frac{1}{2}$ -pound fish. A week later 3 seiners landed 50,000 pounds of mackerel in New York.

Lobsters.---Lobster supplies were light in Boston and brought higher prices than in April 1938.

FISHERIES OF RHODE ISLAND IN APRIL

The Bureau's agent reports lobster prices as higher than a year ago. Production at present averages about 2 pounds per pot per day.

The demand for hard clams is less than last year, with prices about 10 percent lower due to competition from Cape Cod and Southern hard clams. Despite last fall's hurricane, the supply of hard clams in Narragansett Bay decreased only 10 percent. In one instance an excellent set of "seed" clams has appeared in a locality where the hurricane swept the beds practically clear of soft clams.

The market for soft clams is fair but affected by considerable quantities being brought in from Massachusetts. It is estimated the hurricane caused a 25 percent decrease in the supply of soft clams.

FISHERIES OF CONNECTICUT IN APRIL

The Bureau agent reports that the production of most species of fish is 30 percent less than for the same period in 1938. The smaller volume apparently is due to a general scarcity of fish. Some fishermen believe that warmer weather will bring increased production.

Lobster production is less than normal since 90 percent of the lobster pots were destroyed in the September hurricane and many fishermen are not going back into this business.

PRICES OF CHESAPEAKE BAY SHAD LOW

During the latter part of April, Chesapeake Bay shad were arriving in abundance on the Baltimore market, according to the Bureau's agent in that city; however, prices were depressed to the extent that roe shad were selling for as low as 8 cents per pound, with splits and bucks quoted at 3 cents a pound.

FISHERIES OF FLORIDA

Sponges.---The value of the sponges produced at Key West in 1938 is tentatively reported as \$190,000, or over 70 percent greater than in 1937. Prices have advanced nearly 15 percent during recent months. Favorable weather apparently is responsible for the increased production as long periods of clear water prevailed during the winter. Future prospects are in doubt, however, as early in March dying sponges were encountered by fishermen, and it is believed that the same organism that destroyed large areas of sponge beds in the Bahamas is now affecting Key West beds.

Snapper and grouper.---The red snapper and grouper fleet of 29 registered vessels and 4 numbered boats landed 2,314,200 pounds of red snapper and 972,900 pounds of grouper in 1938 at Pensacola, a decrease of 16 percent and 42 percent, respectively, as compared with 1937. The smaller catch is attributed entirely to restricted operations due to longer layovers between trips.

Scallops.--Bay scallop production doubled in 1938 to 7,800 gallons in Bay County. Prices averaged about 25 percent lower. The volume probably would have been greater and prices better if the market had not been affected by the large production of sea scallops in Massachusetts and seizures of "watered" stocks of bay scallops by the Food and Drug Administration.

Oysters.--The Florida Oyster Producer's Association has been organized by dealers and producers to promote the industry. The State, aided by W. P. A. grants, has expended \$500,000 in attempting to rehabilitate oyster beds during the past year.

Crabs.--The demand for stone crabs is greater than the supply in winter tourist resorts. In at least two instances attempts are being made to raise the crabs in artificial surroundings or private areas.

Miscellaneous.--Many Florida dealers believe the development of the winter trawl fishery off the Virginia Capes and the winter mackerel fishery in New England are responsible, in large part, for their oversupplied markets and low prices. In the Palm Beach area catches have been less than expected, the weather and market conditions hindering the kingfish (king mackerel) fishery. In Southern Florida some dealers report the Spanish mackerel production declined over 50 percent as compared with last year. The mullet fishery on the West Coast varied considerably according to the area. In spite of the scarcity of mullet over the State as a whole, prices have been low. Sea trout catches have been about normal.

CATCH IN WISCONSIN LAKE FISHERIES DECREASES

Preliminary statistics indicate that the Wisconsin catch of herring from Lake Michigan in 1938 amounted to about 1,800,000 pounds, representing a decrease of 32 percent in comparison with the 1937 yield. Chub and lake trout landings also decreased, but catches of whitefish and yellow perch showed slight increases.

The Wisconsin Lake Superior fisheries appeared to follow a similar trend in 1938 with a herring yield of 2,500,000 pounds or a drop of 18 percent below the 1937 catch. Chub decreases were also reported.

LARGE QUANTITIES OF FROZEN FISH ENTER CHICAGO MARKET

Approximately 45 percent of all sea food received at the Chicago Wholesale Fish Market during March was frozen, according to figures compiled by the Market News Service of the Bureau of Fisheries. These frozen sea foods, which consisted of 20 different varieties, amounted to 1,912,000 pounds, which represents the largest monthly receipts of frozen fishery products since the Bureau, on September 1, 1938, began the tabulation of Chicago receipts. In poundage, the principal frozen species arriving were sauger, halibut, whitefish, and rosefish fillets. The sources of the sauger and halibut shipments were primarily Manitoba and British Columbia while the whitefish and rosefish fillets originated chiefly in Saskatchewan and Massachusetts.

CHICAGO FISHERY RECEIPTS UP

Receipts of fishery products at Chicago increased considerably during March, 70 varieties totaling 4,232,000 pounds being received. In comparison with receipts for the previous month, this was a gain of 1,678,000 pounds and represents the largest month's receipts since these figures have been tabulated by the Bureau. It is interesting to note that 2,182,000 pounds of fish were imports from 7 Canadian Provinces. The Province supplying the market with the largest amount of fish was Manitoba, which exported to Chicago 1,371,000 pounds, more than a million pounds of which were fresh and frozen sauger. Twenty-three States and Alaska also furnished Chicago with fishery products during March. The leading State, in volume, was Wisconsin with 506,000 pounds, largely smelt and carp.

Sixty percent of these fishery receipts were transported to Chicago via rail freight; 25 percent by motor-truck; and 15 percent by express.

CALIFORNIA TUNA CATCH INCREASES

The Bureau's agent in California reports that the addition of several new vessels in the tuna fishery of California has had marked effect on the catch of tuna during the first 3 months of this year. The catch of yellowfin tuna and skipjack during the first 3 months of 1939 has exceeded 11,400 tons, representing an increase of 80 percent over the catch of these species during the same period of 1938. It should be stated, however, that the fleet was not operating at its full capacity during the early part of 1938. The purse seine fleet in about one month's fishing in the vicinity of Cape San Lucas, Mexico, had taken approximately 4,500 tons of tuna as compared with 5,000 tons during the entire season of 1938. If the present rate of fishing by the purse seine fleet is maintained throughout the normal 3-month season in this area, it is probable that the total catch will approximate 15,000 tons in the Cape San Lucas area. Bluefin tuna were reported taken in California waters early in April. This was looked upon with considerable encouragement due to the fact that bluefin normally do not appear in the local waters of California until late May or early June.

HALIBUT LANDINGS AT SEATTLE DECLINE

In accordance with the regulations of the International Fisheries Commission, the Pacific Coast halibut season opened on April 1, the same date as a year ago. During the current season fishermen will be permitted to land a total of 48,000,000 pounds of halibut, the same amount as in 1938.

The first deliveries of the season at Seattle were made on April 5 when four vessels landed 36,900 pounds of halibut, which sold for from 13 3/4 to 14 1/4 cents per pound for No. 1 fish and 11 to 11 1/8 cents per pound for No. 2 fish. In 1938 the first fares at Seattle also were landed on April 5; however, prices were considerably higher and fishermen received from 21 1/4 to 23 1/4 cents per pound for No. 1 fish and from 17 to 23 1/4 cents per pound for No. 2 halibut. By April 10 of the current season prices had dropped to as low as 8 1/8 cents per pound for No. 1 halibut and to 6 cents for No. 2 fish.

During April of this year halibut vessels landed a total of 2,605,000 pounds of halibut at Seattle. It is estimated that fishermen received an average of between 7 and 8 cents per pound for these fish. In 1938 halibut landings at Seattle during April totaled 3,292,000 pounds, valued at \$236,000, an average of slightly over 7 cents per pound.

MARINE-ANIMAL OIL PRODUCTION INCREASES

A total of 6,400,000 gallons of marine-animal oils were produced by domestic firms during the first three months of 1939. Of this amount, 3,300,000 gallons were produced within the continental United States, while the remainder was manufactured aboard a floating factory ship in the Southern Hemisphere. The production of these oils during the past quarter increased about 1,000,000 gallons, as compared with the same period last year, and was about 2,500,000 gallons more than in 1937.

The increase during the past quarter as compared with the same period last year is accounted for by a greater production of sardine oil, which increased from 1,150,000 gallons in the first quarter of 1938 to nearly 3,000,000 gallons during the same period this year.

The production of marine-animal oils during the first quarter of the current year was composed principally of whale oil, produced in the Southern Hemisphere, which accounted for 48 percent of the total production, and sardine oil produced in California, which amounted to 47 percent. The remaining 5 percent was made up largely of cod, cod-liver, menhaden, and tuna oils. The yield of sardine oil was 100 percent greater than the yield of this oil during the first quarter of 1938, but was only about one-half the amount produced during the

first quarters of both 1935 and 1936 when record yields of about 6,000,000 gallons were produced.

Prior to 1938, the production of marine-animal oils during the first quarter of the year was confined principally to sardine oil. In the first quarter of 1937, the yield of this oil accounted for 94 percent of the total production. However, in the first quarter of 1938, nearly 3,700,000 gallons of whale oil were manufactured in the Southern Hemisphere. This accounted for 70 percent of the production during the quarter, while sardine oil accounted for only 28 percent of the total.

During the past quarter the yields of whale oil and sardine oil were almost identical, amounting to 3,100,000 gallons, and 3,000,000 gallons respectively.

FROZEN FISH TRADE

Domestic Frozen Fish Stocks Lowest Since 1936

Stocks of domestic frozen fishery products totaled 29,744,000 pounds on April 15, a decline of nearly 11,000,000 pounds for the month ending on this date. Holdings on April 15 were 7,600,000 pounds less than those on the same date last year, and were the lowest for any month since April 1936. The decline to this low level is of particular interest in view of the fact that stocks of frozen fishery products were unusually large during the fall months of 1938.

Holdings of frozen fish (exclusive of shellfish) on April 15, 1939, totaled 24,859,000 pounds, a decline of 8,893,000 pounds as compared with the holdings on the same date last year. The decline is accounted for principally by reduced stocks of cod, haddock, pollock, and rosefish fillets, halibut, mackerel, and sablefish. The only important items of frozen fish, the holdings of which were greater than those of a year ago, were blue and sauger pike, sturgeon, and whiting.

Stocks of frozen shellfish on April 15 of this year amounted to 4,885,000 pounds, a decline of 1,269,000 pounds as compared with the same period last year. Current stocks of frozen shrimp, which totaled 3,424,000 pounds on April 15 of this year, are responsible for the large quantity of shellfish in storage at present. The holdings of this crustacean accounted for 70 percent of the total frozen shellfish in storage on April 15. Current holdings of shrimp were over 1,000,000 pounds greater than those of any other single item of fish or shellfish.

Reports from cold-storage plants in the New England States indicate that reduced stocks of frozen fishery products in that area are largely responsible for the decline in holdings during the current year. Stocks in the New England States totaled but 5,093,000 pounds on April 15 of this year as compared with 12,185,000 pounds on the same date last year. The present holdings in New England are less than at any time since May 1934.

Holdings of frozen fishery products on April 15 of this year were greater than those of a year ago in the Great Lakes, Gulf, and Pacific Coast States. Increased stocks of blue and sauger pike in the Lakes States and of shrimp in the Pacific Coast States were largely responsible for the increases in these areas.

A total of 6,912,000 pounds of fishery products were frozen during the month ended April 15, 1939, as compared with 9,082,000 pounds during the same period last year. The principal items frozen during the month were haddock, rosefish and cod fillets, and shrimp. In excess of 700,000 pounds of each of these items was frozen during the month.

Boston Freezer Holdings Low

During April the Boston cold-storage warehouse holdings of frozen fish and shellfish declined 885,000 pounds or 19 percent. The total freezer holdings of fishery products at this important fishing port on the last Wednesday in April amounted to 3,696,000 pounds.

This decrease was largely attributable to reduced quantities of mackerel, pollock fillets, whiting, and smelt being stored. It is interesting to note that of the total holdings, consisting of 35 varieties of sea foods, 1,513,000 pounds were fillets. In volume, the principal fillets frozen were haddock, cod, and pollock. In poundage, the leading frozen fishery product stored was haddock fillets with 656,000 pounds, which represented an increase of 29 percent for this item during the month. Other items in which considerable increases were noted during the period were cod fillets and silver salmon.

Frozen Sturgeon Leads in New York Cold-storage Holdings

Fresh-water sturgeon, in poundage, was the principal variety of seafood stored in cold-storage warehouses located at New York City on the last Thursday in April. On this date approximately 662,000 pounds of this frozen species were held, which, while representing a decline of 10 percent under holdings of four weeks ago, was an increase of 52 percent compared with figures for the previous year. In addition to sturgeon, 58 other varieties of fishery products were stored in the New York freezers on April 27. These fishery commodities weighed 4,903,000 pounds, a decrease of 3 percent for the month and 15 percent for the year. The decrease in the yearly holdings was primarily due to lesser quantities of mackerel, scallops, and bluefish being stored. However, notwithstanding the general decline in holdings, some fishery items registered considerable gains during the year, chiefly shrimp and ciscoes.

Chicago Cold-storage Holdings Decline

Approximately 31 percent of all Chicago cold-storage warehouse holdings of frozen fish and shellfish on the last Thursday in April consisted of blue pike and sauger. The total poundage for these species was 1,334,000 pounds, an increase of 29,000 pounds or 2 percent over the holdings of four weeks ago. While increased quantities were also shown in several other species, the trend of the fishery holdings was downward during the month. Heavy withdrawals of halibut, shrimp, and whitefish contributed to the decline. The total Chicago freezer holdings of fishery products on April 27, consisting of 49 varieties, amounted to 4,313,000 pounds, of which 62 percent were fresh-water fish.

CANNED FISH TRADE

Pacific Salmon Pack in 1938

The pack of salmon during 1938 by all countries bordering on the Pacific Ocean, exclusive of Soviet Russia, amounted to 11,300,000 standard cases computed on the basis of 48 one-pound cans to the case. In comparison with the 1937 production of the same countries, this is a decrease of 2 percent. The normal even-year decline in the abundance of humpback salmon in Puget Sound waters curtailed the pack of this species to less than 400 cases, whereas 329,000 cases were canned in 1937. This decrease primarily accounts for the drop in the total 1938 Pacific pack of all countries for which statistics are available.

Canneries in the United States and Alaska produced 7,280,000 cases of salmon or 64 percent of the total amount canned; Japanese shore plants and floating canneries, 2,312,000 cases or 21 percent; and British Columbia plants, 1,708,000 cases or 15 percent. Of the total Japanese output, 1,199,000 cases were produced on the Siberian fishing grounds.

The aggregate production of 4,747,000 cases of humpback or pink salmon in all areas was the greatest of any single species. Following in the order of their importance were blueback or red salmon, 4,202,000 cases; chum salmon, 1,387,000 cases; silver or coho, 714,000 cases; and chinook or king, 234,000 cases. The steelhead trout pack which is confined to the Columbia River and British Columbia regions amounted to 16,000 cases.

The pack in Alaska during 1938 was 2 percent more than the previous year, but that in the Pacific Coast States, 47 percent less. The pack in British Columbia exceeded that of 1937 by 13 percent; the pack in Japan decreased 17 percent; and the production by Japanese interests operating off the coast of Siberia was 12 percent greater than in 1937.

The most recent available statistics show that the Soviet Russian pack in 1937 was 543,000 cases.

Unsold Stocks of Pacific Canned Salmon

At the end of April 1939 the Association of Pacific Fisheries reported 1,255,000 cases of unsold stocks of canned salmon in the hands of packers. This is compared with 1,324,000 cases and 2,033,000 cases at the end of March and February 1939 respectively. Of the total stocks held on April 30, 63 percent consisted of Alaska reds; 17 percent pinks; 7 percent cohoes, silvers, and medium reds; 5 percent Puget Sound sockeyes; 4 percent each of chinooks or kings and chums; and less than one-half of 1 percent bluebacks and steelheads.

California Tuna Pack Increases

For the first quarter of 1939, the preliminary release of the State of California's Fish and Game Commission reports the tuna pack as amounting to 425,000 cases of 48 one-half pound cans. The pack for the first 3 months of 1938 amounted to 261,000 cases. This year's pack so far represents an increase of 63 percent. Of the several varieties of tuna processed, yellowfin still leads, this commodity representing 83 percent of the total pack. Next in order were striped tuna (skipjack); albacore; tuna, tonno style; tuna flakes; bonito; and bluefin.

California Mackerel Pack Shows Decrease

The mackerel pack for the first three months of this year amounted to 146,000 cases of one-pound cans, or a decrease of 27 percent as compared with the pack during the same period of 1938. This information is based on a preliminary statement released by the State of California's Division of Fish and Game. The total pack for the first quarter of 1938 amounted to 200,000 cases. So far this year all but a fraction of one percent of the total output has been packed in the San Pedro district.

Sardine Pack in California Continues to Increase

The Division of Fish and Game of California in its preliminary monthly statement shows the pack of sardines in California for the 1938-39 season through March amounted to 2,572,000 cases or an increase of 12 percent as compared with the pack for the same period in the preceding year. In the Monterey and Northern districts the pack for the season amounted to 1,287,000 cases or an increase of 30 percent as compared with that for the preceding season. The pack for the present season through March in the San Pedro and San Diego districts amounted to 1,285,000 cases or a decrease of 2 percent as compared with the preceding season. The total production in the State during March amounted to 207,000 cases as compared with 109,000 cases during March 1938. The entire March pack in both years was produced in the San Pedro and San Diego districts.

FOREIGN TRADE IN FISHERY PRODUCTS INCREASES

In March of this year 31,201,000 pounds of edible fishery commodities were imported into the United States, and 13,810,000 pounds were exported from this country. This is an increase of 18 percent in the imports and 15 percent in the exports of these products as compared with the same month last year. During the first three months of the current year 95,179,000 pounds of edible fishery products were imported into the United States as compared with 81,244,000 pounds during the first quarter of 1938. Important items showing marked increases during the current year were salted groundfish which totaled 12,913,000 pounds, an increase of 22 percent as compared with the same period last year; salted herring, 13,305,000 pounds, an increase of 12 percent; canned sardines, 6,644,000 pounds, an increase of 37 percent; canned tuna, 2,183,000 pounds, an increase of 123 percent; and canned crab meat, 3,001,000 pounds, an increase of 147 percent.

Shipments of edible fishery commodities from the United States to foreign countries during the first three months of 1939 amounted to 38,368,000 pounds as compared with 29,079,000 pounds during the same period last year. Exports of canned salmon during the first quarter of 1939 amounted to 13,331,000 pounds, an increase of 62 percent as compared with the same period last year, while those of canned sardines totaled 16,130,000 pounds, an increase of 27 percent.

STURGEON IMPORTS FROM CANADA INCREASE

For several years, Canadian exports of fresh sturgeon to the United States have been steadily increasing. In 1934, when data on these imports first became available, 124,000 pounds of sturgeon, valued at \$24,500, were received from Canada. With the exception of 1935, imports of these fish from Canada have increased each year and in 1938 they amounted to 353,000 pounds, valued at \$118,100, an increase of 185 percent in volume and 382 percent in value as compared with 1934.

According to a report by Warwick Perkins, American Consul at Toronto, Canada, there was a large increase in the shipments of sturgeon to the United States during the latter part of 1938. These resulted from the development of a new source of supply in the Albany River, which flows through northern Ontario.

During the last three months of 1938, imports of sturgeon from Canada amounted to 136,700 pounds, valued at \$45,670, as compared with 62,900 pounds, valued at \$19,600 in the same period of 1937.

Whereas in the past the Canadian sturgeon catch has been a byproduct of other fishing, the Albany River fisheries are confined to this species alone, and can be carried on profitably only because the high price of the fish makes it possible to use aircraft in transporting the catch to a railway shipping point. At present, this point of transshipment is Nakina, on the Canadian National Railways.

When regular operations were begun in September 1938, after a preliminary experimental period, it was hoped that fishing would have to be suspended only during the freeze-up period in the fall and while the ice was breaking up in the spring; that is, when the hydroplanes which must be used cannot land on the water or, equipped with skis, on the ice. During the winter, fishing was to be carried on through the ice, with gill nets. Experience showed, however, that this was impracticable, and fishing will therefore be confined to the season of open water.

While the officials of the Ontario Department of Game and Fisheries state that it is impossible to estimate to what extent production can be expanded, or how long it can be carried on at whatever maximum rate is reached, they are convinced that the available supply of fish is not "unlimited", and will sooner or later begin to show signs of depletion. When this time comes the fisheries may be abandoned, since the high overhead makes it impracticable to reduce the rate of operations below a certain point, and thus conserve the supply indefinitely.

While imports of Canadian sturgeon to this country have increased during recent years, shipments from the Soviet Union, our principal source of supply, have decreased. Imports of sturgeon from the Soviet Union amounted to 1,605,000 pounds, valued at \$229,000, in 1934, but decline to 750,000 pounds, valued at \$156,000 in 1938. As a result of the decline in imports from the Soviet Union, there has been a material reduction in the total imports of sturgeon during the past five years. In 1934 total imports of these fish amounted to 1,744,000 pounds while but 1,184,000 pounds were received in 1938. However, imported sturgeon are still our principal source of supply as the domestic catch has averaged less than 300,000 pounds annually in recent years.

FISHERY TRADE INDICATORS
(Expressed in Thousands of Pounds)

Item	Month	Latest month	Same month a year ago	Previous month
FRESH FISH LANDINGS				
Boston, Mass.	March	26,712	32,621	22,375
Gloucester, Mass.	do	2,302	2,567	1,815
Portland, Me.	do	746	910	612
Boston, Gloucester, and Portland:				
Cod.....	do	6,659	10,320	5,563
Haddock.....	do	14,354	16,582	10,248
Pollock.....	do	1,621	1,701	1,334
Rosefish.....	do	3,812	4,046	5,269
FISH RECEIPTS, CHICAGO 1/				
Salt-water fish.....	do	962	(2)	753
Fresh-water fish.....	do	2,965	(2)	1,405
Shellfish, etc.	do	285	(2)	396
By truck.....	do	1,049	(2)	591
By express.....	do	646	(2)	393
By freight.....	do	2,538	(2)	1,570
COLD-STORAGE HOLDINGS 3/				
New York, N. Y.:				
Salt-water fish.....	April	2,456	3,271	2,325
Fresh-water fish.....	do	1,594	1,519	1,786
Shellfish, etc.	do	853	1,178	946
Boston, Mass.:				
Salt-water fish.....	do	3,492	(2)	4,193
Fresh-water fish.....	do	10	(2)	10
Shellfish, etc.	do	194	(2)	379
Chicago, Ill.:				
Salt-water fish.....	do	1,122	(2)	1,315
Fresh-water fish.....	do	2,677	(2)	2,886
Shellfish, etc.	do	291	(2)	456
Unclassified.....	do	224	(2)	278
United States:				
Haddock fillets.....	do	1,404	4,642	1,568
Halibut.....	do	774	1,450	1,791
Mackerel.....	do	654	1,048	1,899
Pollock fillets.....	do	332	1,855	1,368
Rosefish fillets.....	do	535	1,623	591
Salmon.....	do	3,056	5,511	4,838
Whitefish.....	do	1,564	1,610	1,874
Whiting.....	do	2,342	1,127	3,751
Shrimp.....	do	3,424	(2)	4,108
New England, all species.....	do	5,093	10,879	8,341
Middle Atlantic, all species.....	do	7,178	8,068	9,535
South Atlantic, all species.....	do	1,374	2,334	1,737
North Central East, all species.....	do	6,627	5,698	8,119
North Central West, all species.....	do	2,401	3,122	2,954
South Central, all species.....	do	844	602	1,287
Pacific, all species.....	do	6,228	5,354	8,429
FOREIGN FISHERY TRADE 4/				
Exports:				
All edible fishery commodities.....	March	13,810	9,373	12,491
Canned salmon.....	do	5,308	3,498	3,416
Canned sardines.....	do	5,108	3,143	6,085
Imports:				
All edible fishery commodities.....	do	31,201	26,532	26,983
Fresh-water fish and eels, fresh or frozen.	do	6,061	5,382	5,488
Canned tuna.....	do	970	495	517
Canned sardines.....	do	2,041	1,508	2,453
Cod, haddock, hake, etc., pickled or salted.	do	3,117	5,854	4,802
Herring, pickled or salted.....	do	3,980	3,229	1,899
Crab meat, sauce, and paste.....	do	1,053	497	970
Lobsters, not canned.....	do	897	751	691
Lobsters, canned.....	do	33	48	45

1/ Consists of direct receipts of dealers, brokers, and smokers.

2/ Data not available.

3/ Data for individual cities are as of the last Thursday of the month, except those at Boston which are for the last Wednesday of the month, and those for geographical areas and the total of the United States which are as of the 15th of the month.

4/ From data compiled by the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce.

Note.—Data for the latest month are subject to revision.

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PRACTICAL FISH COOKERY

Fishery Circular No. 19

Few foods can furnish the quality and variety of nutritional factors which are provided in seafoods. Fish and shellfish are excellent sources of highly digestible proteins, are good sources of vitamins, and contain an abundance of minerals in quantity and variety.

Seafoods would be served much more frequently in American homes if better methods for their preparation for the table were more widely known. Consequently, the Bureau of Fisheries prepared a booklet which includes tested recipes on fish cookery. Since pan-dressing or sautéing of fish is one of the most popular methods of cookery employed by the housewife, the following successful method covering this procedure has been excerpted from this booklet:

Pan Frying or Sautéing Fish

- 2 lbs. fillets or steaks about 5/8 in. thick,
or 3 lbs. whole fish or fish split to about
5/8 in. thick.
- 1 C. yellow cornmeal and flour, equal parts.
- 1 1/3 Tbsp. salt.
- 4 Tbsp. cooking fat or oil.

Heat fat over a slow fire in a heavy cast-metal pan if available. Cut fish to service portions. Sift together the cornmeal, flour, and salt. Dip fish in water and cover well with dry ingredients. At the first sign of the fat smoking, place the fish in the pan and cook 3 minutes. Cover the pan and remove it from fire to allow fish to cook in its own steam about 2 minutes. Remove cover, turn fish, return pan to flame, and cook 3 minutes longer. Fish less than 5/8 in. thick will require a shorter cooking time, while thicker fish will require longer cooking.

The booklet also includes general information on broiling, baking, boiling, and planking of fish, and in addition includes specific recipes for the preparation of oysters, shrimp, crabs, clams, lobsters, scallops, salted fish, smoked fish, chowders, flaked fish, and fish sauces.

This booklet may be obtained from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, this city, by requesting Fishery Circular No. 19, entitled "Practical Fish Cookery", by Agnes I. Webster and W. T. Conn. The cost per copy is 5 cents.

